(d) The agreement referred to in the reply to (b) above does not cover defence personnel. However, serval improvements have been made in pay and allowances relating to the defence personnel.

Institute for tranining Insurers

704. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to start an institute for training of insurers; and

(b) if so, the aims thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Duty Appraisal and Collection to Foreign Companies

705. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are planning to entrust the function of duty appraisal and collection to foreign companies; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) Several complaints have been received from time to time about undervaluation and mis-classification of imported goods leading to loss of revenue as also undue delays in cargo clearance at the ports and airports. With a view to overcoming these problems, Government have been considering several measures. Recently, the Directorate of Valuation has been set up to disseminate information on international prices and also monitor valuation practices in the Customs formations. One of the Suggestions that came up for consideration in this regard was the use of preshipment inspection for ensuring correct classification and valuation of imported goods. It is in this context four preshipment companies made presentations on the role of pre-shipment inspection. No decision has been taken in the matter.

Rate of Premium Charged by Insurance Companies for Fishing Boats/Vessels

706. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of premium charged by insurance companies for fishing boats and fishing vessels owned by fishermen;

(b) whether the fishermen and their associations have represented to Government and the insurance companies regarding the prohibitive rate of premium and to reduce the premium rates to the level of motor vehicles; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) The premium rates for fishing vessels-boats upto Rs. 50 lakhs sum insured, as determined by the Tariff Advisory Committee (TAC), is 3% of the sum insured for mechanised wooden vessels and 3.5.% for non-mechanised wooden vessels. For vessels beyond Rs. 50 lakhs sum insured, rates are fixed by the TAC individually on merits. Till fixation of such rates provisional premia are charged by the companies subject to adjustments later. As regards the representations received from fishermen and their Associations the TAC have reported that information has been sought from the General Insurance Industry regarding claims experience in the matter.